THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government seeks an overall improvement in Indo-Pak relations including by strengthening trade between the two countries. The Joint Statement issued at Islamabad at the conclusion of foreign Secretary level talks between India and Pakistan in June '97, identified Economic and Commercial Cooperation as one of the subjects for future discussions with the objective of strengthening trade relations and it was decided to set up working groups at appropriate levels to address the various issues identified in this connection. The next round of Foreign Secretary level talks is scheduled to take place in September' 97.

Jewellery Policy

553. SHRI NARAYAN ATHAWALAY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Revenue deptt. dilemma over gems, jewellery policy" appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated June 30, 1997;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government to the observations made therein and the facts of the matter;

(c) the action taken by the Government in this regard; and

(d) the details of the proposals under consideration for making changes in EXIM policy and the present status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Interministerial discussions are an established procedure in the Government to arrive at decisions. Following such procedure, a large number of Notifications and instructions have been issued by Department of Revenue after the EXIM Policy for 1997-2002 was notified. Some other issues are under examination in consultation with the Ministry of Commerce.

Export Oriented Units

554. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of our exports through export processing zones and export oriented units during each of the last three years;

(b) the value contents of exports and imports of EPZs/EPUs during each of the last three years;

(c) the details of export processing zones and value of exports from each zone; and

(d) names of new export processing zones to be developed during the Ninth Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (c) A Statement is attached.

(d) Keeping in view the availability of funds and the need to optimise the infrastructural facilities in the existing Export Processing Zones, there is no proposal, at present for Central Govt. to set up new Zones in the country. However, Export Processing Zones can now be established by State Governments or in joint/private sector.

Statement

Year	Exports made by Export Oriented Units (EOUs) and Units in Export Processing Zones (EPZs). (Rs. Crores)	Imports made by Export Oriented Units (EOUs) and Units and Export Processing Zones (EPZs) (Rs. Crores)	Percentage of EOU and EPZ exports in the total exports of the country
1994-95	7363.11	3077.28	8.90
1995-96	10229.88	5920.95	9.61
1996-97 (Estimated)	12527.73	7015.48	10.42